CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1157
25 June 1992

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LETTER DATED 24 JUNE 1992 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AUSTRALIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS FOR DISARMAMENT MATTERS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING THE STATEMENT ISSUED BY PARTICIPATING STATES AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE THIRD CHEMICAL WEAPONS REGIONAL SEMINAR, HELD IN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, FROM 21 TO 23 JUNE 1992

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Statement issued by participating States at the conclusion of the third Chemical Weapons Regional Seminar, held in Sydney, Australia, from 21-23 June 1992.

I should be grateful if you would take the necessary steps to circulate this Statement as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed): Paul O'Sullivan

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CHEMICAL WEAPONS REGIONAL INITIATIVE (CWRI)
THIRD SEMINAR SYDNEY - 21-23 JUNE, 1992
SEMINAR STATEMENT

Seminar participants from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Laos, Malaysia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, the Solomon Islands, Thailand, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Vietnam and Western Samoa met informally in Sydney on 21-23 June, 1992 in order to consider progress towards eliminating chemical weapons and preventing their future development under a global Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and to share views and exchange information on recent developments.

Seminar participants noted that their countries are not producers of chemical weapons, and have no intention of developing, stockpiling, deploying or using such weapons, nor of allowing their introduction into the region. Seminar participants affirmed their respective government's shared abhorrence of chemical weapons, their use or threat of use. They call upon all states which possess chemical weapons and/or chemical weapons production facilities on their territories or in any place under their jurisdiction or control to respect the regional consensus against chemical weapons, and to take early steps to become party to the Convention, with the objective of totally banning and destroying this class of weapon and its production facilities.

In particular, participants agreed that the conclusion of a comprehensive, verifiable, universal and non-discriminatory CWC remains absolutely central to ensuring a world freed from the use and threat of use of chemical weapons.

Participants urged those involved in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to redouble their negotiating efforts as a matter of the highest priority, in response to the 1991 call of the United Nations General Assembly that a Convention be agreed during the CD's 1992 session. Participants noted with satisfaction the role in support of this objective being played by regional states which are CD members or observers and the favourable response given to the Australian proposal of 19 March, 1992 with a view to speeding up negotiations on the basis of a compromise package approach, taking into account the security and economic interests of all countries.

Participants affirmed their respective governments' views that the global and regional effectiveness of the forthcoming Convention would be considerably enhanced by early action by all states of South East Asia and the South Pacific to adhere

as original states parties. Participants confirmed that their respective governments were giving favourable consideration to the United Nations General Assembly's call to all states to commit themselves to becoming original states parties to the CWC.

In this context, participants noted the requirement in the Chemical Weapons Convention draft text for each state party to make initial declarations on chemical weapons - relevant matters. In preparation for signature of the Convention, and noting the potential regional confidence-building benefits of such declarations in their own right, participants recommended that governments in the region mutually exchange statements in the terms required for such declarations. Participants agreed that this regional initiative in support of the Convention be drawn to the attention of the Conference on Disarmament.

Although unable to participate in the Seminar, Nauru has expressed a wish formally to associate itself with the above Statement.